(b) Basic materials for the production of Steroids and Cartico-Steroids being agro based, no estimate of demand and availability has been carried out recently.

(c) and (d) In order to ensure adequate production of steroids and cartico-steroids, imports of some intermediates, production of which is not adequate at any point of time in the country, are allowed under Open General Licences.

Production of Diosgenin

1896. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the drug companies which are licensed to produce Diosgenin and Solasodine in the country along with the licensed capacity of each;

(b) what are the basic materials from which these items are being produced;

(c) whether it is a fact that the production of these items is gradually decreasing;

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(e) what was the production of each of these two items during the last three years, yearwise as well as imports of each during the same period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETRO-CHEMICALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) According to information available, Solasodine has not been licensed to any company in the organised sector. Names of companies granted industrial approvals in the organised sector for the manufacture of Diosgenin, along with capacities are given below:

(i) M/s. Cipla	22.2MT
(ii) M/s. Searle	5 MT
(iii) M/s. Malabar Phyto Chemicals	7.5 MT

(b) Diosgenin is being produced from Dioscorea roots.

(c) to(e) This Ministry monitors the production of 87 bulk drugs only. Diosgenin and Solasodine, Which are basic inputs for the manufacture of cartico-steriods, are not monitored. Details of imports are published in the Monthly Statistics for Foreign Trade in India, Vol. II, copies of which are available in the parliament library.

Import of bulk drugs

1897. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of bulk drugs which are being exported to other countries are allowed for import under Open General Licence;

(b) if so, what are the names of such drugs alongwith the licensed capacity of each as well as Seventh Plan targets; and

(c) what are the reasons for allowing such imports and what steps are being taken to save valuable foreign exchange in this rgard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETRO-CHEMICALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.